

# The Will of the Voices

**Community Representatives at  
North Yarra Community Health**

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# What will we talk about?

- How did we start?
- **Terms of Reference**
- **The Voyage**
- **CAPPS**
- **CEP**
- **Recognition**
- Community views
- **Committed Persistence &....**

**Laughter helps!!!**

**Effective participation** is enhanced through  
engaging in a **culturally appropriate  
approach**,  
devoting **adequate resources**  
and **time** to the process,  
providing **information and skills** to  
participants,  
**communicating respectfully** and  
having open and **inclusive meetings**.

Flinders University and the South Australian Community Health Research Unit (2000)  
Flinders University (Department of Public Health) & South Australian Community  
Health Research Unit (2000). *Improving health services through consumer  
participation: a resource guide for organisations*. Canberra: Commonwealth  
Department of Health and Aged Care

# How did we start?

\* 1994: Amalgamation - a leading spoon -

Dedicated role – committed BOM

- Community engagement: Existing & new
- Ingredients: members, transport, support, interpreters, multicultural refreshments, speakers & info & guest speakers, discussion, trust



# TERMS OF REFERENCE

## (a Sub-Committee of the BOM)

- ***Provide & update information, NYCH services, health promotion information and activities within NYCH and in the locality***
- Enable the community to ***have a say*** in the running of their local health centre by bringing up concerns, feedback and suggestions for improvement to services provided which will be acted upon.
- ***To build a bridge of three-way communication between Board members, the staff and the community.***



# The Voyage

- 1994 . . . to today . . . and thereafter
- *Planning, Representatives & Forums*
- **Social & Cultural groups & Diverse needs**
- *Community: acceptance of difference, empowerment, service access, social justice & equity, knowledge on specific health issues.*
- **Staff involvement** facilitates greater familiarity
- *Linkages* with other providers and institutions as part of creating greater connectedness
- **Main projects: CAPPS & CEP**

## CAPPS: 1999-2001

- 12 consultants – active partnerships
- **Aim:** provide way for consumers to represent communities by working with NYCH staff, local & state governments to **improve the provision of community and health services.**
- **Training: PCP, Health Issues Centre, RMIT**  
on how to gather issues & concerns from the community, how to effectively present , how to work with service providers & how to advocate for the community



# CEP-Community Empowerment P

*Late 2001 - 2004*

- **3 Project workers** Fitzroy, Richmond & Collingwood (45 advocates) to represent issues of interest from the different communities
- **Projects:**
  - Centrelink closure,
  - Ballroom dancing,
  - Reconciliation BBQ,
  - FlatOut (post prison women),
  - Sewing group,
  - Indochinese walking group (10,000 steps),

# CEP projects (to today...)

- Conversation series on topic of interest: Legal, education, safety...
- Information sessions at the Collingwood Information Centre,
- Timorese support action group,
- Refugees and Asylum Seekers' photographic exhibition,
- Laughing group
- **Presentation at the PCP Conference**
- **Community representatives at NYCH**





# Recognition

- 2001 *International Year of Volunteer* award at National Community Link Volunteer Awards.
- **2003: Award from VMC for providing best services to multicultural communities.**
- 2005: Award from *Federation of Ethnic Communities Council in Victoria* for contribution to Multicultural Communities during Harmony Week

**Community thoughts**

**& commitment**



# Committed persistence

- 10 year history highlights importance of **persisting in the face of challenges to community participation** &
- Achievements are possible when there is strong commitment from all stakeholders to the process.
- **Partnership & Leadership / Trust / Respect / Belief / Acceptance / Capacity Building / Sustainance**

**Laughter**

**helps**